

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

101504Z Jan 01

CONFIDENTIAL PTQ9628

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ACTION AF-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	AMAD-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00	DINT-00
	DODE-00	DOTE-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	EB-00	EUR-00	FAAE-00
	FBIE-00	VC-00	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	LAB-01
	L-00	VCE-00	AC-01	NSAE-00	OIC-02	OMB-01	OPIC-01
	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00	SCT-00	SP-00
	IRM-00	STR-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRM-02
	DRL-02	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00	/011W		
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FM AMEMBASSY HARARE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7977  
INFO NSC WASHDC PRIORITY  
SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY  
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 HARARE 000181

SIPDIS

NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR GAYLE SMITH

LONDON FOR CHARLES GURNEY

PARIS FOR BISA WILLIAMS

NAIROBI FOR TERRY PFLAUMER

PASS USAID FOR A/AID RMCCALL, AA/AFR VDERRYCK, AFR/SA  
CPALMA

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PASS USTR FOR ROSA WHITAKER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/10/11  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PINS](#) [PINR](#) [ZI](#)  
SUBJECT: VIOLENCE AND INTIMIDATION CONTINUE IN ZIMBABWE  
BY-ELECTION DISTRICT

REFTEL: HARARE 7164

CLASSIFIED BY CHARGE D'AFFAIRES EARL M. IRVING FOR  
REASONS: 1.5 (B) AND (D).

[11.](#) (C) SUMMARY: THE LEVEL OF VIOLENCE IN BIKITA WEST--  
WHERE A SPECIAL PARLIAMENTARY BY-ELECTION WILL BE HELD  
JANUARY 13-14 TO FILL A SEAT LEFT VACANT BY THE DEATH OF  
THE INCUMBENT--HAS CONTINUED IN RECENT WEEKS AS ZANU-PF  
SUPPORTERS STEP UP THEIR INTIMIDATION CAMPAIGN. WAR  
VETERANS AND ZANU-PF YOUTH CONTINUE TO BEAT UP MDC  
SUPPORTERS, WHEREAS THE MDC HAS DEPLOYED ITS OWN YOUTH  
TO "PROTECT" ITS CAMPAIGNERS. THE GOVERNMENT OF  
ZIMBABWE AND ZANU-PF ARE DOLING OUT LARGESSE IN AN  
UNABASHED ATTEMPT TO BUY VOTES. BOTH PARTIES ARE  
BRINGING IN HEAVY-HITTERS FROM HARARE TO HOLD RALLIES IN  
THE MASVINGO DISTRICT, ACCORDING TO AN MDC ADVISOR.  
GIVEN ZANU-PF'S HAM-FISTED TACTICS, AND THE WIDESPREAD  
FEAR AMONG THE ELECTORATE, WE WOULD BE SURPRISED IF THE  
MDC PULLED OUT A VICTORY HERE. END SUMMARY.

[12.](#) (C) OUR CONTACTS HAVE INFORMED US OF NEW INCIDENTS  
OF VIOLENCE AND INTIMIDATION IN BIKITA WEST. AN ADVISOR  
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TO MDC CANDIDATE BONIFACE PAKAI, ALEX MUPA, CLAIMED THAT  
ON JANUARY 6 A DRIVER FOR MDC PRESIDENT MORGAN  
TSVANGIRAI (WHO ADDRESSED A CAMPAIGN RALLY THAT

SIPDIS

WEEKEND), WAS SEVERELY BEATEN BY A GANG DIRECTED BY WAR  
VETERANS LEADER AND ZANU-PF MP FOR CHIKOMBA CHENJERAI  
HUNZVI, AND HAD TO BE HOSPITALIZED IN HARARE.  
TSVANGIRAI TOLD JOURNALISTS ON JANUARY 10 THAT HUNZVI

SIPDIS

HAS BEEN GIVEN "CARTE BLANCHE" TO CARRY OUT A CAMPAIGN  
OF TERROR IN THE AREA, WITH THE COMPLICITY OF SOME  
POLICE OFFICERS. MUPA ALSO STATED THAT WAR VETERANS, IN  
POLICE UNIFORMS, HAVE BEEN VISITING SUSPECTED MDC  
SYMPATHIZERS IN THE NIGHT AND THREATENING THEM WITH  
DEATH IF THEY VOTE FOR THE MDC, A REPORT CONFIRMED TO US  
BY TSVANGIRAI'S RIGHT-HAND MAN, GANDI MUDZINGWA. HE  
CLAIMED THAT ZANU-PF SUPPORTERS ARE INFLECTING INJURIES  
ON VOTERS' HANDS SO THAT THEY CANNOT VOTE ON ELECTION  
DAY. (NOTE: VOTERS ARE REQUIRED TO HAVE THEIR HANDS

STAMPED WITH INVISIBLE INK AFTER VOTING--IF THEY CANNOT RECEIVE THE STAMP, THEY ARE DISQUALIFIED FROM VOTING. END NOTE.) PRISCILLA MISIHAIRABWI-MUSHONGA, MDC MP FOR GLEN NORAH, TOLD POLOFF THAT SHE SENT TWO STAFF MEMBERS TO BIKITA JANUARY 7 TO INSPECT THE VOTERS' ROLLS. THEY WERE BEATEN WITHIN 24 HOURS OF ARRIVING IN THE DISTRICT, THE MDC MP ASSERTED. MUPA REPORTED THAT PAKAI'S CAMPAIGN MANAGER WAS ABDUCTED ON JANUARY 8 AND TAKEN TO A REMOTE LOCATION WHERE HE WAS BEATEN WITH CLUBS.

13. (U) AT A JANUARY 10 PRESS CONFERENCE, TSVANGIRAI PRESENTED 11 OF 13 MDC SUPPORTERS WHO HE CLAIMED WERE DETAINED AND TORTURED FOR FIVE DAYS AT BIKITA WEST POLICE STATION, THEN DROPPED IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT  
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IN NEARBY GONAREZHOU GAME PARK, WHICH IS FULL OF LIONS, RHINO, AND OTHER WILD ANIMALS. TWO OF THE YOUNG MEN HAD BADLY BRUISED FACES. MUDZINGWA TOLD POLOFF THAT MOST OF THE ALLEGED VICTIMS DID NOT SHOW EVIDENT SIGNS OF TORTURE AS THEY HAD BEEN BEATEN ON THE BOTTOMS OF THEIR FEET. ELEVEN MANAGED TO FIND THEIR WAY OUT, BUT THE OTHER TWO REMAIN UNACCOUNTED FOR. CALLING THE INCIDENT "UNPRECEDENTED," TSVANGIRAI SAID THE ENVIRONMENT IN BIKITA WAS NOT CONDUCTIVE TO A FREE AND FAIR ELECTION. THE MDC, HOWEVER, WAS DETERMINED NOT TO BOYCOTT THE VOTE, BECAUSE DOING SO WOULD HAND THE SEAT TO ZANU-PF AND BECAUSE THEIR SUPPORTERS IN THE AREA HAVE URGED THE OPPOSITION PARTY TO PRESS ON. TSVANGIRAI STATED THAT MANY LOCAL RESIDENTS HAD TOLD MDC OFFICIALS THAT THEY WERE ATTENDING LOCAL ZANU-PF RALLIES OUT OF FEAR OF WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF THEY DID NOT, BUT THAT THEY INTENDED TO CAST THEIR BALLOT FOR THE MDC ON ELECTION DAY.

14. (C) ZANU-PF IS ALSO DISPENSING GOVERNMENT LARGESS TO SKEW THE VOTE IN ITS FAVOR. THE GOVERNMENT REPORTEDLY HAS OFFERED TO PAY SCHOOL FEES FOR THOSE WHO VOTE FOR ZANU-PF, AND WE HAVE HEARD A REPORT THAT YOUTH DEVELOPMENT MINISTER BORDER GEZI HAS DOLED OUT Z\$3 MILLION (US\$50,000) TO ZANU-PF SUPPORTERS AND POTENTIAL VOTERS TO SECURE THEIR VOTE FOR ZANU-PF. ACCORDING TO

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	DRL-02	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00	/011W		
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P 101504Z JAN 01  
FM AMEMBASSY HARARE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7978  
INFO NSC WASHDC PRIORITY  
SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY  
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 HARARE 000181

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BY-ELECTION DISTRICT

MUPA, THE LOCAL YOUTH ARE RECEIVING BETWEEN Z\$1,000 AND Z\$10,000 EACH TO DO EVERYTHING FROM VOTING FOR ZANU-PF TO BEATING UP MDC SUPPORTERS. MUPA CLAIMED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS ESTABLISHED A NEW RESETTLEMENT AREA IN THE SAVE CONSERVANCY--WHICH EXTENDS INTO BIKITA--IN ORDER TO DISTRIBUTE LAND TO THOSE PROMISING TO VOTE FOR

ZANU-PF. HE STATED THAT ZANU-PF IS DRAWING UP A "SUPPLEMENTAL" VOTERS' ROLL OF APPROXIMATELY 3,400 NEW VOTERS--MOSTLY FROM AREAS OUTSIDE BIKITA WEST--WITH THE COOPERATION OF THE ELECTORAL SUPERVISORY COMMISSION (ESC). THE ESC ALSO FAILED TO NOTIFY THE MDC OF AN EARLY JANUARY MEETING WHERE IT ASSIGNED MOSTLY LOCAL CIVIL SERVANTS, POLICE AND CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE ORGANIZATION OFFICERS AS PRESIDING OFFICERS TO OVERSEE THE POLLING STATIONS, ACCORDING TO MUPA.

15. (C) DESPITE THE VIOLENCE AND LEVEL OF FEAR AMONG THE POPULACE, BOTH ZANU-PF AND MDC ARE BRINGING IN THEIR HEAVY-HITTERS TO CAMPAIGN IN THE DISTRICT. ZANU-PF HAS BROUGHT IN FOREIGN MINISTER MUDENGE, LOCAL GOVERNMENT MINISTER CHOMBO, MASVINGO GOVERNOR JOSIAH HUNGWE, YOUTH DEVELOPMENT MINISTER BORDER GEZI AND OTHERS TO CONDUCT UP TO FIVE RALLIES A DAY IN THE DISTRICT. MUPA CLAIMED  
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THAT THE ZANU-PF RALLIES ARE DRAWING FEWER THAN 200 PEOPLE EACH, AND MOST OF THEM ARE ELDERLY WOMEN--TRADITIONAL ZANU-PF SUPPORTERS. THE MDC, FOR ITS PART, HAS SENT VICE-PRESIDENT SIBANDA, SECRETARY-GENERAL NCUBE, NATIONAL CHAIRMAN MATONGO, 10 MPS AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE, IN ADDITION TO TSVANGIRAI'S APPEARANCE LAST WEEKEND. THE MDC HAS HELD

SIPDIS  
FOUR RALLIES ACROSS THE CONSTITUENCY, ACCORDING TO THE PARTY'S E-MAIL UPDATE. MUPA CLAIMED THAT ITS RALLIES HAVE ATTRACTED BETWEEN 500 AND 2,000 PEOPLE EACH. ACCORDING TO THE MDC'S INFORMAL SURVEYS OF LIKELY VOTERS, THE MDC WILL WIN THE ELECTION BY 2,500 VOTES (7,500 FOR MDC AND 5,000 FOR ZANU-PF).

16. (C) GANDI MUDZINGWA, TSVANGIRAI'S ADVISOR, SAID THE DEPLOYMENT OF MDC YOUTH HAS RESTORED A BIT OF STABILITY TO THE AREA. THESE YOUTH, HOWEVER, HAVE FOCUSED ON PROTECTING THE MDC CANDIDATE AND THOSE CAMPAIGNING FOR HIM, LEADING WAR VETERANS AND ZANU-PF SUPPORTERS TO FOCUS THEIR INTIMIDATION CAMPAIGN ON ORDINARY CIVILIANS. MUDZINGWA WAS DUBIOUS ABOUT WHETHER DEPLOYING MDC YOUTHS WAS A SUSTAINABLE LONG-TERM STRATEGY, AS IT REQUIRED "COLOSSAL" RESOURCES, AND THE OPPOSITION PARTY WAS CURRENTLY IN DESPERATE FINANCIAL STRAITS.

17. (C) COMMENT: GIVEN ZANU-PF'S WIDE RANGE OF HAM-FISTED INTIMIDATION AND MANIPULATION TACTICS, AND OUR CONTACTS' REPORTED LEVEL OF PERVASIVE FEAR AMONG VOTERS, THE ODDS ARE AGAINST THE MDC HOLDING ONTO ITS BIKITA WEST SEAT IN PARLIAMENT. IT WOULD TAKE A LARGE VOTER TURNOUT FOR THE MDC TO WIN, AND THAT APPEARS UNLIKELY IN  
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THE CURRENT ELECTION CLIMATE. THE MDC'S PROJECTIONS OF VICTORY ARE A BIT OVEROPTIMISTIC, IN OUR ASSESSMENT, ESPECIALLY IF IT BELIEVES ONLY 12,500 OUT OF 40,000 ELIGIBLE VOTERS WILL TURN OUT ON ELECTION DAY. THE MARONDERA WEST BY-ELECTION AND THE JUNE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS SHOWED THAT LOW VOTER TURNOUTS DO NOT FAVOR THE MDC, AND SOME OBSERVERS HERE ALREADY ARE CALLING THE ELECTION A ZANU-PF WIN. END COMMENT.

IRVING

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